



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

PAROLE BOARD

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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

DENNIS CHUBBUCK
W37288

TYPE OF HEARING: Initial Hearing

DATE OF HEARING: January 29, 2026

DATE OF DECISION: July 7, 2026

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Edith J. Alexander, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Sarah B. Coughlin, Angelo Gomez Jr., James Kelcourse, Rafael Ortiz

VOTE: Parole is denied with a review in 3 years from the date of the hearing.¹

PROCEDURAL HISTORY: On September 26, 1979, following a jury trial in Suffolk Superior Court, Dennis Chubbuck was convicted of rape and murder in the first-degree for the death of D.D..² He received two concurrent sentences of life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Mr. Chubbuck became parole eligible following the Supreme Judicial Court's decision in Commonwealth v. Mattis, 493 Mass. 216 (2024), where the court held that sentencing individuals who were ages 18 through 20 at the time of the offense (emerging adults) to life without the possibility of parole is unconstitutional. As a result of the SJC's decision regarding Mr. Chubbuck's first-degree murder conviction, he was re-sentenced to life with the possibility of parole after 15 years.

On January 29, 2026, Mr. Chubbuck appeared before the Board for an initial hearing. He was represented by Attorney Debra Beard-Bader. The Board's decision fully incorporates by reference the entire video recording of Mr. Chubbuck's January 29, 2026, hearing.

¹ One Board Member voted to deny parole with a 2 year review, and one Board Member voted to deny parole with a 4 year review.

² The name of the victim has been redacted to maintain the confidentiality of a victim of sexual assault.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On October 21, 1978, Dennis Chubbuck (age 20) raped and murdered 15 year old D.D. in West Roxbury. The two had been seen together on other occasions prior to the murder and, on at least one occasion, had gone with other teenagers to a wooded area behind the Altenheim Nursing Home in West Roxbury. On the day of the murder, Mr. Chubbuck and D.D. were seen together on several occasions and, at 6:30 p.m., D.D. called a friend to let her know that she and Mr. Chubbuck were going to Altenheim. At approximately 7 P.M., an Altenheim resident heard a male and female outside the nursing home walking towards the woods. The next day, D.D.'s body was found in the woods behind the Altenheim Nursing Home. She was naked from the waist down with injuries to her vagina, and her skull had been crushed by a large rock.

Mr. Chubbuck called his sister several times on the day after the murder, informing her that D.D. was "missing," that he was at the airport, and that he had a "problem" because "naturally, they are going to come after me." Mr. Chubbuck fled to Texas, where he was arrested on January 19, 1979. While he was on the run, Mr. Chubbuck had several phone calls with family members, where he admitted that he had killed D.D.

APPLICABLE STANDARD: Parole "[p]ermits shall be granted only if the Board is of the opinion, after consideration of a risk and needs assessment, that there is a reasonable probability that, if the prisoner is released with appropriate conditions and community supervision, the prisoner will live and remain at liberty without violating the law and that release is not incompatible with the welfare of society." M.G.L. c. 127, § 130. In making this determination, the Board takes into consideration an inmate's institutional behavior, their participation in available work, educational, and treatment programs during the period of incarceration, and whether risk reduction programs could effectively minimize the inmate's risk of recidivism. M.G.L. c. 127, § 130. The Board also considers all relevant facts, including the nature of the underlying offense, the age of the inmate at the time of the offense, the criminal record, the institutional record, the inmate's testimony at the hearing, and the views of the public as expressed at the hearing and/or in written submissions to the Board.

Where a parole candidate was convicted of first-degree murder for a crime committed when he was ages 18 through 20 years old, the Board considers the "unique aspects" of emerging adulthood that distinguish emerging adult offenders from older offenders. Commonwealth v. Mattis, 493 Mass. 216, 238 (2024). Individuals who were emerging adults at the time of the offense must be afforded a "meaningful opportunity to obtain release based on demonstrated maturity and rehabilitation" and the Board evaluates "the circumstances surrounding the commission of the crime, including the age of the offender, together with all relevant information pertaining to the offender's character and actions during the intervening years since conviction." Id. (citing Diatchenko v. District Attorney for the Suffolk Dist., 466 Mass. 655, 674 (2013) (Diatchenko I); Miller v. Alabama, 567 U.S. 460, 471 (2012); Graham v. Florida, 560 U.S. 48, 75 (2010)). Since brain development in emerging adulthood is ongoing, the Board also considers the following factors when evaluating parole candidates who committed the underlying offenses as an emerging adult: 1) a lack of impulse control in emotionally arousing situations; 2) an increased likelihood to engage in risk taking behaviors in pursuit of reward; 3) increased susceptibility to peer influence which makes emerging adults more likely to engage in risky behavior; and 4) an emerging adult's greater capacity for change. See Mattis, 493 Mass. at 225-229.

DECISION OF THE BOARD: Mr. Chubbuck is parole eligible as a result of the Mattis decision. He has been incarcerated for 47 years. Mr. Chubbuck was on parole for a sex offense at the time of the instant offense. He has only recently started SOTP (Sex Offender Treatment Program). The Board reviewed the evaluation of Dr. Bard. The Board reviewed the Mattis factors in analyzing Mr. Chubbuck's rehabilitation and the circumstances of the crime. The Board encourages Mr. Chubbuck to continue with SOTP and rehabilitative programming. The Board considered testimony in support of parole from Mr. Chubbuck's friend and 2 members of his family. The Board also considered testimony in opposition to parole from 2 friends of the victim, 2 family members of the victim, and Suffolk County Assistant District Attorney Montez Haywood. The Board concludes that Dennis Chubbuck has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitation that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society.

I certify that this is the decision and reasons of the Massachusetts Parole Board regarding the above-referenced hearing. Pursuant to G.L. c. 127, § 130, I further certify that all voting Board Members have reviewed the applicant's entire criminal record. This signature does not indicate authorship of the decision.


Angelo Gomez Jr., Chair

July 7, 2026
Date